Tourism, Culture and Recreation
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Over 1,300 Athletes to Compete at 2008 Newfoundland and Labrador Summer Games

The Honourable Clyde Jackman, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Recreation, will officially open the 2008 Newfoundland and Labrador Summer Games on Saturday, August 9, at the Pepsi Centre in Corner Brook. Official ceremonies begin at 7:30 p.m.

"The City of Corner Brook has proven time and again its exceptional ability to host sporting events of this magnitude, and I am certain the 2008 Newfoundland and Labrador Summer Games will be no exception," said Minister Jackman. "The Summer Games are always an exciting time for athletes, and this event will no doubt be a memorable experience for everyone involved."

Approximately 1,300 athletes from eight regions across the province, as well as from St. Pierre and Miquelon, will participate in the games, which will continue through to August 16. The games will feature a total of nine sports – ball hockey, baseball, beach volleyball, golf, soccer, softball, swimming, tennis, as well as track and field events.

Minister Jackman said Provincial Government support for the event, held bi-annually, includes $200,000 to support the efforts of the organizing committee, $150,000 to cover athletes' travel costs and, this year, an additional $35,000 for upgrades to the Stephenville track and field facilities to enable the athletics component of the games to be held in that community.

"Both the Summer and Winter Games support the goals outlined in the province's recreation and sports strategy, *Active Healthy Newfoundland and Labrador* (2007), and play a significant role in the continued development of sport in this province," said Minister Jackman. "While these games are competitive, young athletes are also provided an opportunity to further develop their personal athletic skills, meet new friends, and are better able to understand the value of physical activity as part of a healthy lifestyle."

Brian Bonnell, chair of the Corner Brook organizing committee, said he is looking forward to this event, which is the culmination of many months of planning and hard work on behalf of the organizers.

"It has been a pleasure working with the host committee and the City of Corner Brook as we prepared to provide the athletes with an opportunity to excel in their respective sports, achieve personal best results, and make new friends," said Mr. Bonnell. "It is our collective goal to ensure the athletes have a positive experience at the games that they will remember fondly for years to come."

The Newfoundland and Labrador Games is a program of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador that was initiated in 1974 as a series of regional competitions held in different locations in the province. Held every second year, alternating winter and summer, the games, the largest multi-sport event staged for youth in the province, bring together young athletes from 11 to 18 years of age from all regions of the province.

For more information and daily updates on the competitions, visit: www.nlgames.ca

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